

GREEN LAMPYRIDS (COLEOPTERA: LAMPYRIDAE)

Green is not an unusual color among insects, but in the Lampyridae apparently only one species, *Aspisoma physonotum* Gorham (Biol. Cent.-Amer., Ins., Coleop., 1885, 3(2):272, pl. 12, fig. 7) has been reported as green. While specimens of this species may have entirely pale green elytra, many have only the lateral borders green. In a collection recently received from Peru were fourteen specimens of a small *Lucidota*, all having some green coloration, ranging from merely a greenish tinge on the pronotum to distinctly green and with a fine green line at the inner edge of the elytral explanate margins and opaque green sutural bead for two-thirds the length from the scutellum. This species is presumably *Lucidota (Leucothrix) albocincta* Pic (L'Échange, 1927, 43:52 hors texte) or closely allied to it, although the green coloration is not referred to in the original description. Accompanying the greenish specimens were seven of a smaller species, only slightly different in appearance, except for the absence of green pigmentation.—FRANK A. McDERMOTT, *Wilmington, Delaware.*



BEETLE TALK

“The question now arises, since there are differences between adult and larval relations, whether the relationships based on adult characters alone should be used or whether the larval relationships should also be taken into consideration, and if so, how”? So says F. J. Rohlf in an article entitled, “Congruence of larval and adult classifications in *Aedes* (Diptera: Culicidae),” published in *Systematic Zoology*, Vol. 12, pp. 97-117, 1963. This problem, the lack of congruence, has been hanging fire for a long time, but recently there is a small show of interest in it. As Rohlf says, so too should coleopterists say and think hard on his question. Beetle larvae have been left to specialists on larvae, and coleopterists have been very lax in considering both larvae and adults in their classifications. As a result, if an outsider were to look at most revisions and classifications, he would guess that larvae and adults of beetles are in different orders. Why this situation; why should different stages of the same taxon be handled separately so often? Probably because of custom; the early taxonomists hardly ever mention larvae. So, our task of correlating classifications will be difficult because the backlog of published data is less for larvae than for adults. Even so, the time for correlation is now.

How can larvae help us? In the data-gathering part of making a new classification, the taxonomist searches for new characteristics. Many say they would rather discover a new characteristic in an old taxon than a new taxon. Well, larvae have many characteristics, though they might not always be helpful. We don't ignore incongruent characteristics in adults, so why should we ignore a whole stage of the life cycle just because it might be incongruent? Certainly the scientific method allows us to weigh data, but it most certainly does not allow us to disregard whole blocks of data.

But, we may ask, are larvae available? Often larvae can not be included in a revision or classification because larvae of the group are unknown. This is not always the case. In the United States a few collections can supply larvae of a few forms. These larvae must be used. And it is probably not wrong to say that a collector is remiss if he fails to collect larvae as well as adults. To neglect larvae in collections or in collecting is to ignore data. And that is the important point, the point to which this argument must always return: rejection of data. When we periodically examine our conscience on our methods of research, we must answer this sore question on ignoring larval data. If we believe that beetle larvae and beetle adults belong to the same order, then we had better begin showing it.—T. J. SPILMAN, *U.S.D.A., Washington, D. C.*